

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6767

INFO AMEMBASSY ANTHENS

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJECT: TURKS VIEW FONMIN VISIT TO BULGARIA AS SUCCESSFUL

1. TURKISH EMBASSY SOFIA SOURCES VIEW JULY 16-21 VISIT OF FONMIN BAYULKEN AS A SUCCESS, ALTHOUGH THEY DESCRIBED TALKS AS "VERY HARD BARGAINING". SAME SOURCES REPORT THAT, AS EXPECTED, GOB SOUGHT TURKISH AGREEMENT TO "DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES" SIMILAR TO THAT GOB SIGNED WITH GREECE. TURKS DECLINED ON BASIS THAT SUCH DOCUMENT "PREMATURE" AND COMMUNIQUE MERELY ENDORSES PRINCIPLES OF UN CHARTER. COMMUNIQUE REFLECTS OTHER SUBJECTS COVERED IN TALKS INCLUDING AGREEMENT ON EXCHANGE OF HIGH LEVEL FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS, JOURNALISTS, INCREASED COOPERATION ON HYDROLOGICAL AND HYDRO-ELECTRICAL QUESTIONS, AND AGREEMENT ON SMUGGLING (INCLUDING EXCHANGE OF NARCOTICS INFORMATION).

2. TALKS, HOWEVER, NEARLY BOGGED DOWN ON MINORITIES PROBLEMS. WHILE TURKS WERE PLEASE THAT GOB AT LONG LAST WILLING DISCUSS MINORITIES, INCLUDING THORNY
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PROBLEMS OF POMAKS, LITTLE PROGRESS WAS MADE. TURKS,

HOWEVER, ARE GRATIFIED THAT COMMUNIQUE CALLS FOR REGULAR EXCHANGE OF VIEWS BETWEEN EXPERTS ON MINORITIES QUESTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF 1968 AGREEMENT ON RESETTLEMENT OF ETHNIC TURKS WITH CLOSE RELATIVES IN TURKEY. THIS VISIT, ACCORDING TO SAME SOURCES, IS FIRST TIME GOB HAS BEEN WILLING TO EVEN DISCUSS POMAK PROBLEM, LONG-STANDING IRRITANT IN BILATERAL RELATIONS.

3. LITTLE PROGRESS REPORTEDLY MADE IN ECONOMIC QUESTIONS, MOST OF WHICH HAVE BEEN DEFERRED FOR JOINT TURKISH-BULGARIAN COMMISSION WHICH NOW TO BE CONVENED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

4. FONMIN MLADENOV CONTINUED TO BUILD REPUTATION AS ASTUTE STATESMAN AND TOUGH NEGOTIATOR AND, AS IN CASE OF GREEK VISIT, MADE STRONG IMPRESSION ON HIS NATO COUNTERPART.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH MANY OUTSTANDING DIFFERENCES REMAIN (RABOTNICHESKO DELO CAPTIONED COMMUNIQUE "FRUITFUL EXCHANGE OF OPINIONS), VISIT SUCCESSFUL FROM GOB POINT OF VIEW IN CREATING ATMOSPHERE OF HONEST DIALOGUE BETWEEN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. WILLINGNESS TO TACKLE TOUGH ISSUES, SUCH AS MINORITIES, MAY REFLECT GOB DESIRE TO INCREASE FOREIGN POLICY ROLE IN BALKANS. BAYULKEN VISIT CAME AT PROPITIOUS MOMENT IN THIS REGARD AND WAS PLAYED UP IN MEDIA AS NEW EVIDENCE OF BULGARIA'S DESIRE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH CAPITALIST STATES.

6. MLADENOV MAY VISIT TO ATHENS ANNOYED TURKS BECAUSE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES INCLUDED REFERENCES TO SELF-DETERMINATION OF PEOPLES (I.E. GREEK CYPRIOTS). GREEKS ANNOYED AT BAYULKEN SPEECH JULY 17 DIRECTLY ENDORSING CYPRIOT INDEPENDENCE, SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND AT REPETITION THIS PHRASEOLOGY IN COMMUNIQUE. BULGARIA THUS CONTINUES TO PROFIT FROM GREEK-TURKISH DIFFERENCES OVER CYPRUS.
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